

**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING H.R. 3036, A BILL TO DESIGNATE THE NATIONAL SEPTEMBER 11 MEMORIAL LOCATED AT THE WORLD TRADE CENTER SITE IN NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK, AS A NATIONAL MEMORIAL, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**September 11, 2015**

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Thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 3036, a bill to designate the National September 11 Memorial located at the World Trade Center site in New York City, New York, as a national memorial, and for other purposes.

The Department understands and appreciates the significance of the events of September 11, 2001, to the nation. We support memorializing and providing educational opportunities to learn about that day and its effects on our country and on the world. However, as H.R. 3036 provides no federal role in administering, interpreting, or preserving the resources of the memorial, and is only intended to authorize \$25 million in federal funding for seven fiscal years to the Foundation managing the site, we strongly oppose this legislation.

H.R. 3036 designates the National September 11 Memorial as a national memorial, but it specifically provides that this memorial would not be a unit of the National Park System. The bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to award a grant of up to \$25,000,000 each fiscal year for seven years to the National September 11 Memorial and Museum at the World Trade Center Foundation, Inc. for the operation and maintenance of the national memorial. It requires the Foundation to report to the Secretary of the Interior and to Congress at the end of each fiscal year on the amount and purpose of any grant expenditures that fiscal year.

The objective of the bill is to have the NPS provide grants to the Foundation annually for its operation and maintenance without any federal involvement in the operation of the memorial. There are no other circumstances where NPS provides annual operating funds to a site not managed in accordance with NPS standards except for some affiliated areas which receive relatively small amounts.

In addition, if the \$25 million grant comes out of the NPS budget, it would reduce the amount of operational funding available for the needs of our 408 designated units of the National Park System. The \$25 million grant is more than the annual funding appropriated for nearly 99% of the units of the National Park System. The NPS does not have room in its budget to absorb a cost of this magnitude, nor do we believe it is appropriate to divert operational resources needed to fulfill our legislated responsibilities to a site for which the NPS has no role.